

**Listing of Claims:**

**Claim 1 (currently amended):** An energy-absorbing and vehicle directing barrier system, comprising:

a barrier located adjacent a vehicle path that extends parallel therewith;

a first impact panel with a first proximal end and a first distal end, said first proximal end is fixedly mounted directly to said barrier to be immovable when said first impact panel is impacted by a vehicle, said first impact panel further has a first flat, distal portion between said first proximal end and said first distal end that is parallel to said barrier, said first impact panel further has a first flat, proximal portion between said first proximal end and said first distal end that is positioned adjacent said barrier and extends along therewith, said first impact panel further has a first angular portion between said first proximal end and said first distal end that extends angularly outward from said barrier in a direction from said first proximal end to said first distal end, said first angular portion is angularly connected to said first flat, proximal portion and angularly connected to said first flat, distal portion;

a second impact panel with a second proximal end and a second distal end, said second proximal end is fixedly mounted directly to said barrier to be immovable when said second impact panel is impacted by a vehicle, said second impact panel further has a second flat, distal portion between said second proximal end and said second distal end that is parallel to said barrier, said second impact panel further has a second flat, proximal portion between said second proximal end and said second distal end that is positioned adjacent said barrier and extends along therewith, said second impact panel further has a second angular portion between said second proximal end and second distal end that

Amendment Response  
Serial No. 10/634,178      Group Art Unit 3637  
Atty. Docket No. 5659-3  
Page 2 of 11

extends angularly outward from said barrier in a direction from said second proximal end to said second distal end, said second angular portion is angularly connected to second flat, proximal portion and angularly connected to second flat, distal portion, said second flat, distal portion is positioned adjacent and inwardly of said first distal end portion with said first distal end portion overlapping said second flat, distal portion and being unconnected thereto while being independently slidably movable relative to said second flat, distal portion, said first flat, distal portion and said second flat, distal portion extending parallel with respect to each other and to said barrier directing a vehicle impacting said first impact panel and said second impact panel along an area extending across said first flat, distal portion and said second flat, distal portion in the direction of said vehicle path parallel to said barrier, in a direction from said first proximal end to said second distal end;

a first crushable member positioned between the first impact panel and the barrier, said first crushable member absorbing a portion of the collision energy of a vehicle impacting said first impact panel; and,

a second crushable member positioned between the second impact panel and the barrier to absorb a portion of collision energy of a vehicle impacting said first impact panel and said second impact panel and to direct a portion of collision energy along the length of the barrier system as the vehicle is directed by said first flat, distal portion and said second flat, distal portion parallel to said barrier.

**Claims 2-3 (previously cancelled)**

**Claim 4 (currently amended):** The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 1 wherein:

said first crushable member is dimensionally adapted to fit between the first flat, distal portion and the second flat, proximal portion, and between the first angular portion and the second angular portion enclosing said first crushable member and separating said first crushable member from said barrier;

said second crushable member is dimensionally adapted to fit between said second flat, proximal portion and an adjacent impact panel enclosing said second crushable member and separating said second crushable member from said barrier;

said first flat, distal portion is adjacent to said first crushable member and outwardly adjacent to said second flat, distal portion to directly contact and deflect said first flat, distal portion against said first crushable member and the second flat, distal portion against said second crushable member upon vehicle impact of said first impact panel

~~the first impact panel is impacted sufficiently to directly contact and deflect the first impact panel against the second impact panel sufficiently to deflect the second impact panel against the second crushable member.~~

**Claims 5-19 (previously cancelled)**

**Claim 20 (currently amended):** The barrier system of claim 1 wherein:

said first impact panel has a first inner plate positioned adjacent said barrier and extends along therewith, a first outer plate, and a first intermediate plate joining said first inner plate and said first outer plate together, said first inner plate and said first outer

Amendment Response  
Serial No. 10/634,178      Group Art Unit 3637  
Atty. Docket No. 5659-3  
Page 4 of 11

plate are parallel to said barrier whereas said first intermediate plate extends outwardly from said barrier in a direction from said first proximal end to said first distal end spacing said first outer plate apart from said barrier forming a cavity in which is located said first crushable member;

said second impact panel has a second inner plate positioned adjacent said barrier and extends along therewith, a second outer plate distally adjacent to first outer plate, and an second intermediate plate joining said second inner plate and said second outer plate together, said second inner plate and said second outer plate are parallel to said barrier whereas said second intermediate plate extends outwardly from said barrier in a direction from said second proximal end to said second distal end spacing said second outer plate apart from said barrier forming a cavity in which is located said second crushable member; and,

said first outer plate rests against outwardly of said second outer plate and forces said second outer plate toward said barrier when said first impact panel is impacted by a vehicle with said first outer plate and said second outer plate being flat and extending in a direction of said barrier directing the vehicle in a direction along said barrier.

**Claim 21 (previously added):** The barrier system of claim 20 and further comprising: the first inner plate having one or more fastener holes for fastening the first impact panel to said barrier;

a pliant fastening system pliantly fastening the first impact panel to said barrier, including pliable material adapted to be placed between the first impact panel and the

barrier, and a fastener fastening the pliable material between the first impact panel and the barrier.

**Claim 22 (currently amended):** A method of absorbing impact energy from a vehicle, comprising the steps of:

providing a first impact panel having a first flat portion spaced apart from but extending parallel to a barrier forming a cavity in which is located a first crushable device;

providing a second impact panel having a second flat portion spaced apart from extending parallel to the barrier forming a cavity in which is located a second crushable device, said first flat portion located outwardly against but unconnected to said second flat portion;

impacting said first flat portion with a vehicle;

moving said first flat portion against the first crushable device;

at least partially crushing said first crushable member;

slidably moving said first flat portion against said second flat portion;

at least partially crushing said second crushable member; and,

directing said vehicle along an area extending across said first flat portion and said second flat portion in the direction of said barrier ~~by said first flat portion and said second flat portion.~~